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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the equity mandate of the National Institute of Education (NIE) and ongoing and planned research designed to enhance equity within the Institute's three major programs. First, the paper summarizes the congresssional mandate and how the concept of equity evolved. Next, it details the three NIE programs including those on teaching and learning, policy and organization, and dissemination and improvement of practice. Strategies to assess the progress NIE has made in meeting its equity mandate--such as in program areas--conclude the paper. (Author/LD)

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EQUITY AS A GUIDING THEME FOR NIE

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NIE's Equity Mandate

When the National Institute of Education was created by the Congress in 1972, its mission was set out in the initial paragraph of the authorizing legislation:

The Congress hereby declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide to every person an equal opportunity to receive an education of high quality regardless of his race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or social class...To achieve quality will require far more dependable knowledge about the processes of learning and education than now exists or can be expected from present research and experimentation in this field. (P.L. 92-318, Section 405)

The National Council on Educational Research has emphasized the equity aspect of NIE's Congressional mandate in its general guidance to NIE and in specific policies such as Policy 75-04 on participation of minorities and women in research, and Policy 77-01 on instructional improvement.

As envisioned by its legislation, NIE was to be concerned with both a general and a special task: to improve the quality or practice of education, and specifically to find ways to increase educational equity. Since practice has been understood to include everything from the setting of educational policy and structuring of educational finance to more effective classroom methods, it includes virtually anything that might hold some promise of improving American education.

The mission of providing for greater educational equity is, however, both more specific and more complex. More specific, because it identifies a particular historical problem ("Although the American educational system has pursued this objective...inequalities of opportunity...remain pronounced," as the authorizing legislation puts it). Yet more complex: six different

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group characteristics that have been the basis for discrimination are specifically mentioned (race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and social class). Although groups with these characteristics have been the object of some kind of differential treatment based on ascribed or imputed group characteristics, each pattern of discrimination has its own historical evolution and present status. Moreover, the educational problems to be addressed range from problems of equal educational opportunity (denial of access or equal resources because of membership in one of these groups) to problems of equity: the provision of educational experiences for the poor, minorities, and women that are appropriate to their individual needs and thus constitute "an education of high quality."

Sponsoring research that will promote greater equity for all of the groups mentioned by the authorizing legislation (and for others not mentioned, such as the handicapped) is, then, extraordinarily complex. The barriers that must be overcome differ in degree, in mode of operation and in severity. Further, at any given time, there are varying levels of current public awareness and professional concern (although religious discrimination is specifically mentioned by the authorizing legislation, for example, it is not an item of high priority at present).

A thorough study of the barriers to educational equity requires a sound knowledge of both the groups being denied equity and the institutions which are not adequately serving them. To emphasize only the former would be to run the danger of "blaming the victim". On the other hand, to examine only institutions would make it impossible to provide detailed information on the specific needs and characteristics of the client group that institutions must have to work more effectively for members of the group.

The Evolving Concept of Equity

By 1977-78, NIE had had considerable experience with the difficulties of trying to create definitions of educational equity. As one paper prepared for the Reorganization Task Force in 1977 notes, for example, a definition acceptable to the courts is not the same thing as a definition for educators. "An educational program suitable to the needs and aspirations of each individual", is a perfectly acceptable goal for an educator, but not a definition which a court can enforce. "Equity research" is not just the collection of data on educational phenomena broken down by race or sex. Rather, it involves the search for an understanding of the mechanisms by which inequities are brought about, and thereby for the means by which these inequities can be ended. Thus, a search for a precise and necessarily restricting definition of equity may be both self-defeating and inappropriate for an agency such as the National Institute of Education.

Despite the futility of attempts to define equity, it is possible to identify obstacles that interfere with access to and participation in mainstream activities. It is possible to determine when illegitimate barriers, based on ascriptive characteristics of individuals and groups, deny equity. It is appropriate to identify strategies and interventions designed to remove inequities in practice, and to evaluate these strategies. Although we avoid attempts at general definition, we can be quite concrete about what constitute inequities in specific circumstances, and perhaps, as knowledge and theory advance, about criteria for judging when acceptable levels of equity have been achieved.

There are two types of barriers with which such research must be concerned. The first are structural, financial and institutional impediments (inequalities of opportunity) which stand in the way of the enhancement of equity. Examples include segregated schools, imbalances in school financing, quotas and tracking. The second category of obstacles is less easily identified and dealt with. Barriers to true educational equity include the effects of stereotypes and biases, differential experiences in homes, communities and schools, and results of historical patterns. Research on ways to achieve equity must deal with these process factors as well as matters of structure.

Studies of the two kinds of barriers, and of the strategies to address them, may focus on one or the other type, but must at the same time demonstrate explicitly the connection between the two. It is easier, for example, to identify and, through the law, remedy financial resource inequities in schools than it is fully to address and correct teacher biases, the results of early socialization, and differential home and community experiences. Research designed to move society and its institutions toward greater equity must pay attention to both types of obstacles.

The Institute takes the position that research to improve educational equity must take a broad look at processes and outcomes as well as at access issues. Research must be concerned with the effects of programs, teaching practices, textbooks, and peer interactions in schools and colleges on the life of students from all ethnic, racial, sex, and socioeconomic groups. It must also be concerned with the ways by which educational practice—the ways teachers perform the art of teaching—can reduce the degree to which race, ethnic background, sex, and social class influence educational attainment.

The Institute has recognized the scope and importance of equity as it relates to educational practice and institutions, and has reaffirmed its commitment to research on equity and to its Congressional mandate to address this issue directly. Equity research has expanded from the domain of one organizational unit at the Institute to become the principal unifying thrust for all research activity at NIE. Today, there is considerably more attention to research on equity and to the equity implications for all educational research at the Institute than ever before in NIE's history. Indeed, equity is now the most pervasive and recurrent theme in all program groups and in the research they design.

The recent planning activity for FY 1981 explicitly emphasized the role that equity must play in the Institute's research programs. The importance of this thrust is reflected in the plans that have been prepared. It is not an exaggeration to say that every program at NIE is striving to incorporate equity considerations as an integral part of its work and to have an impact on educational equity. This represents a substantial shift in program orientation, and this shift toward equity can be expected to continue. This subtle, but important, change in conceptualization of research has taken place because the Institute's equity focus has been made unmistakably clear, backed up by the planning process and budgetary decisions.

The approach to equity research in each organizational unit was determined by the nature of its special area of concentration and by the special research issues selected for emphasis. While the approaches and areas of concern are different, the research of each program group addresses directly both specific structural and/or environmental obstacles to equity and strategies needed to overcome these barriers.

The following sections present examples of ongoing and newly-planned research designed to enhance equity in various ways. The examples are illustrative and not a complete list. They include research both on ways to reduce both structural/institutional barriers to equity and on non-structural impediments to equity.

Program on Teaching and Learning

The Program on Teaching and Learning, as one would expect, focuses its research primarily on the classroom, teacher, and individual student achievement. As such, the units within Teaching and Learning place heavy emphasis on improving equity by affecting what goes on in the school and in the classroom. The research proposed for FY 1981 concentrates attention on the sources of differential achievement and on differences in program opportunities between different categories of students.

The Learning and Development unit, for example, will conduct research on basic cognitive skills including (1) problem solving, (2) comprehension and the acquisition of knowledge, and (3) ways of approaching tasks in an organized, non-impulsive fashion or drawing simple logical conclusions. In a rapidly changing technological environment, it is difficult to predict what knowledge students will need or what problems they will have to solve twenty years from now. What they really need to know is how to learn the new information and skills that will be required throughout their lives. Clearly, much of the value of education for the students' later life comes from whatever general learning and thinking skills are acquired along with the specific knowledge which the schools impart. However, training in learning and thinking skills is not a standard part of the school curriculum.

There is evidence from the National Assessment of Educational Progress that it is problems with the complex, rather than the basic skills, that lead to differences in achievement between groups. For example, reading comprehension is a greater problem for students than lack of decoding skills; writing problems are due more to shortcomings in organizational and thinking skills than to the mechanics of writing.

Since we know that successful students do differ from unsuccessful students in use of learning strategies, the problems that schools have in teaching general learning skills may be an important source of educational inequity. There are presently a large number of experimental and commercially available programs that focus on improving students' thinking and learning strategies. It is expected that the next product of the cognitive skills group will be a publication for teachers summarizing current methods of teaching cognitive skills and describing informed researchers' opinions about the state of cognitive skills training. The cognitive skills group will also conduct fundamental research in areas where there is currently insufficient information on which to base effective educational programs.

Historically, research on language development (reading, writing, speaking and listening) has been prominent in the Institute. Concern for language development is equally prominent in the minds of educators, parents, the public and Congress. Until recently attention in both research and practice has focused on language development in the early years: how children develop the ability to speak, how children learn the basic reading skills, and particularly what difficulties children from minority and low-income families have in learning to read during the early school years.

Long term funding of Research for Better Schools, Inc., Learning Research and Development Center, Southwest Regional Laboratory, and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory has over the last decade made a substantial contribution to our understanding of the sub-skills of reading, such as decoding skills. Through reading programs that develop and use this knowledge, we have demonstrated that children who previously have had difficulty reading can learn to read successfully. NIE-sponsored work at these Labs and Centers has also introduced the concepts and methodologies of criterion-referenced testing which has joined norm-referenced testing as a major tool for evaluation.

Recently, however, attention has shifted to new lines of inquiry. These are: (1) difficulties in achieving reading comprehension, particularly among children from low-income and minority families; (2) the nature and extent of functional illiteracy; (3) problems in communicating through writing; and (4) the special conditions of language development and functioning among bilingual persons. Current projects as well as those proposed for FY 1981 focus on these questions with special emphasis being placed on improving the language development of minority and bilingual children. For example, the Children's English and Services Study has established criteria for eligibility and conducted a nationwide survey of the numbers of children that could be eligible to receive language-related services. The Center for the Study of Reading is examining cultural differences in children's experiences with language prior to the middle grades in order to improve later success in reading comprehension and the speech of older children. Several projects at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory are studying cognitive styles in six different ethnolinguistic groups,

the effects of different types of reading instruction on Spanish-English bilingual children, and the special instructional needs of teaching staff in schools enrolling substantial numbers of bilingual children.

The objective of the Testing, Assessment and Evaluation unit is to improve educational practice through increasing the functional utility of testing and program evaluation. The FY 1981 testing plan looks closely at the role of tests as instruments of educational selection and sorting and as diagnostic and educative tools. In both instances, research on testing is guided by the premise that tests and testing practices today require study in order to understand their limitations and their implications for equity issues. Of special concern in this group's research plan is the potential misuse of test information in the schools and the equity implications of such misuse on the educational and life opportunities of students. Specifically, the plan focuses on the following major categories of activity: (1) the ways in which test information is currently used in the schools to guide instruction, selection and sorting, (2) the cultural and language factors which affect test performance, (3) the strategies by which test information can be integrated with other sources of performance data to give a more comprehensive picture of student achievement, and (4) the development and identification of tests which provide diagnostic information about children that can be used to guide instruction. In all the research to be sponsored by the division, emphasis is placed on the role and impact of testing in schools for minority and low-income students.

In the field of evaluation, the Testing, Assessment and Evaluation unit is carrying out three evaluations of inner city education programs designed to aid minority and disadvantaged students. This effort is

especially important, because there has been a tendency in the past for some users of evaluations to have unrealistic expectations about the impact of intervention programs. This has worked to the disadvantage of these programs. Special efforts are being made to overcome this problem in these three evaluations. These three projects include the Push for Excellence Program, the Cities in Schools Demonstration, and the Career Intern Program. This latter project is of special interest since it was jointly developed by the Institute and the Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OIC). The Career Intern Program is an alternative high school program for 16 to 21 year olds who have dropped out of school or are in serious risk of dropping out before graduation. Between 1972 and 1975, the Career Intern Program served over 500 young people in Philadelphia. Findings from the initial evaluation showed significant improvements on standardized tests of participants' reading and math scores. In addition, participants showed increased awareness of careers and were able to set specific educational and career goals. Absenteeism was also curbed and the rate of school completion was significantly increased. Because of these results the Institute is funding a replication and field test of the prototype in four sites: Seattle, Detroit, New York City and Poughkeepsie. The primary purpose of the University of Mid-America, another evaluation project with a strong concern for equity, is to reach out to people who are unable (often for geographic reasons) or unwilling to enroll in traditional higher education programs. Since 1972 when the program was created, the project has enrolled 10,000 students and an estimated 2,000,000 people have viewed its programs.

Recognizing that mathematical skills are needed for many high-status and well-paying technological and other careers, and that women and minorities encounter barriers to learning advanced mathematics skills in schools, the Mathematics Learning staff is sponsoring research to develop new training strategies in mathematics.

In 1977, ten awards were made to examine the major cognitive, affective, and social factors influencing the attitudes, preferences, and decision-making processes and achievement of girls and women in school mathematics and in occupations requiring competence in mathematics. Several findings from these studies have proven useful to researchers and teachers. One of these is that peer influences, which may act as a barrier to girls' enrollment in mathematics courses, appear less important than were previously thought. What appears from some studies to be more important is that teachers give subtly different encouragement and rewards to boys than they do to girls who do well in mathematics. The results from another study suggest that the differences in mathematics achievement are largely due to a small group of high achieving boys. (Several hypotheses have also emerged such as: boys scores may be higher because they may be more willing than girls to guess at an answer.) The integration of equity into the Institute's mathematics program is further demonstrated by several projects sponsored under the 1979 grants competition which will investigate the mathematics handicaps of bilingual, American Indian, and other minority children. Research to be undertaken in FY 1981 will study the fundamental nature and development of mathematical skills and the nature of mathematical tasks encountered in and out of school.

The research plans of another division, the Teaching and Instruction unit, focus on understanding and interpreting the ways that teaching methods and organizational practices (e.g., ability tracking) significantly facilitate (or impede) learning. The research begins with the proposition that students from minority and low-income backgrounds, on the average, are served less well by our schools than are other students. The FY 1981 plan proposes to concentrate research efforts on classrooms in minority and low-income schools, particularly in grades 6-12. Recent studies sponsored by the Institute have shown that specific attention to the needs of low-income and low-achieving children facilitates these students' learning. They have also shown that certain classroom grouping and reward arrangements result in significant increases in learning, especially for low-achieving children, increases in peer tutoring and cooperation, and increases in the frequency of cross-race friendship choices. The proposed research will build on these findings to describe the determinants of effective instruction further and to identify and implement ways of improving instruction.

Program on Educational Policy and Organization

The FY 1981 plans of the Program on Educational Policy and Organization are very different from what might have been expected and produced by researchers in this area attempting to address equity concerns a decade ago. The plans do not concentrate exclusively on issues of equality of educational opportunity, such as denial of access or equal distribution of resources. These issues remain important but, because of progress already made and the realization that equity extends beyond the

elimination of structural barriers, the plans reflect very serious attention to learning how individual schools, classrooms, teachers, administrators, or interventions can improve educational equity.

The Desegregation Studies staff's research plan for FY 1981 draws upon and extends current activities. In 1975, the Institute initiated a major study on the process of desegregation. This study pointed to the difficulties communities and schools were having in planning and implementing school desegregation. The results of this research on desegregation were summarized at the last meeting of the Council. Building on this effort, an Equity Grants Program was announced in spring, 1978, with the purpose of probing more deeply into the specific problems identified in the 1975 study. Over 20 grants were funded that explore such important topics as black and white student interaction and achievement, Hispanic segregation and desegregation trends, avoiding and resolving community conflicts, and the experiences of black undergraduates in predominantly white institutions of higher education.

The research plan for FY 1981 devotes considerable attention to the study of the characteristics and nature of successfully desegregated schools and classrooms. The proposed research, to be undertaken through a grants competition, focuses on the kinds of school and classroom organizations, behavior, teaching methods and curricular and extra-curricular activities that characterize a successfully desegregated multi-cultural/multi-lingual school. Similarly, proposed desegregation research also looks at effective ways to prevent resegregation and at exemplary leadership and teacher models in the desegregation process.

The Teaching Policy Studies staff has recently completed a study of collective bargaining agreements in big and middle-sized cities which

shows that while these agreements have provided benefits to teachers and students they have constrained local school administrators in how they organize and employ staff resources. Preliminary findings of another study indicate that public sector services for children in California have been reduced as a result of Proposition 13. Currently the Institute is sponsoring research to examine the impact of Proposition 13 on low income children. The FY 1981 plan will concentrate attention in the classroom. In particular, proposed research will examine the ways Federal and state education policies influence what happens in classrooms, and will examine the actions of teachers as the ultimate policy implementors. The research program plan in Teaching Policy Studies focuses on local responses to policies, such as P.L. 94-142 and bilingual education, aimed at increasing equity.

The Institute's efforts to improve rural education have a strong and well-integrated equity emphasis. This program area recognizes the serious equity concerns in rural education. Rural school districts include sizeable numbers of groups which we traditionally categorize as disadvantaged: over 20% of all Blacks and Hispanics are rural, 70% of all Native Americans, and 800,000 migrant workers also reside in non-metropolitan settings. Rural students have less access to services, achieve less in their schools, and are less likely to enroll in postsecondary education than are students from metropolitan areas. The research program is not only concerned with rural education problems but also at many positive features unique to rural schools. Previous institute sponsored research has helped define problems facing rural populations and the institutions serving them. For example, one study has challenged conventional wisdom regarding the economies and educational benefits of

school district consolidation. Building on these past efforts, proposed research for FY 1981 will examine programs and services developed to meet the special needs of rural students, teachers, and schools, as well as at the policy effects of implementing P.L. 94-142 in rural schools.

The Educational Finance unit is assisting states to achieve greater equity in the financing of educational institutions. Efforts to reform state finance systems have been targeted at achieving two distinct equity goals: (1) reducing inter-district disparities in educational expenditures, and (2) making local school district revenues less dependent on wealth and more dependent on tax effort. In the last seven years, 22 states have enacted reforms in their school finance systems. One Institute-sponsored study just being completed has examined the effects of recent school finance reforms in five states. This study has found that the results of school finance reforms have been mixed. To the extent these reforms were aimed at reducing inter-district spending differences, accomplishments have been minor. To the extent that tax equalization was an aim, the results of these reforms have been substantial. Two current projects with the National Conference of State Legislators and the Education Commission of the States are providing technical assistance, conducting policy studies, and disseminating information on research, court decisions and state legislation bearing on school finance. Through the National Conference of State Legislatures project, the Institute has provided matching funds to 15 states for applied policy studies on state school finance issues. This program group is working closely with the Congressionally-mandated HEW School Finance Study, which is examining the Federal role in the financing of elementary and secondary education.

The Postsecondary Organization and Management staff in the Program on Educational Policy and Organization will continue giving attention to equity in its program plan for FY 1981. Moving away from questions and problems of access at the undergraduate level (though not at the graduate level), research plans for expanded work in postsecondary education focus on a grants competition designed around such equity issues as: (1) the types of institutions that minority students enter, (2) the successes and failure of students once they get in, (3) the accommodations made by institutions to new categories of students who are inadequately prepared, (4) the relationship between choice of an institution and subsequent life chances and social mobility, and (5) the distribution of students within and between programs within institutions. The equity thrust in this program group, as in the others within the Program on Educational Policy and Organization, is on how the educational institution's program and services affect students, and on the degree to which what is done and what happens in education is related explicitly to the redress of social inequities.

The Education Amendments of 1976 direct the Institute to undertake "a thorough evaluation and study of vocational education programs." A primary concern of this legislation is to assure that disadvantaged students, women, and limited English-speaking students gain equal access to high quality vocational programs. To assess the extent to which Federal funds are achieving these objectives, the Vocational Education Study is making an inventory of existing programs, conducting case studies of state compliance and evaluation practices, and analyzing Federal and state vocational reports. The results of these studies will provide the basis for changes in existing laws or new legislation when the Youth Employment and Demonstrations Project and Vocational Education Acts are reauthorized in 1980 and 1981.

Program on Dissemination and Improvement of Practice

The main objective of this program is to use research information to improve the practice of education. Throughout the program, there are efforts to make dissemination services advance educational equity. Some services are designed to bring educational research information to districts with high concentrations of minority and low-income children in the schools. Others attempt to increase the representation of minority group members and women in senior educational research positions. In addition, the Program on Dissemination and Improvement of Practice conducts research on how to make information available to teachers and principals that will help them increase equity in their classes and schools.

This year, The Dissemination and Improvement of Practice Program created an Urban Team to assist educators in large cities in using knowledge to improve educational practice. This Institute initiative has important equity implications since a large proportion of students in urban public schools are low-income and minority. The Urban Team has assembled groups of urban school superintendents to identify ways in which research-based information can help them provide higher quality and more equitable education in their districts. To meet equity concerns, the Urban Team will develop materials oriented toward the specific problems and information needs of large cities, and will work with urban teachers and administrators to facilitate the exchange of information.

NIE's Experimental Program on Opportunities in Advanced Study and Research in Education was established as one major response to the Council's Resolution 19.6 of September, 1975, that NIE should have a positive policy "to increase the participation of minorities and women" in research and

development. The purpose of this program is to explore ways of increasing opportunities for minority group members and women to obtain experience in educational research and attain senior positions as educational research professionals. Data indicate that the participation of minorities and women in educational research and development continues to be low, particularly at senior levels. The main activity to date has been a grants competition for projects that attempt to redress this under-representation by a variety of means. Many of these projects have emphasized the post-doctoral level and are designed to improve the utilization of persons whose training is already advanced. During FY 1981, the group will continue this grants program and will fund projects both at the predoctoral and postdoctoral levels. This group will also conduct research seminars, provide dissertation support, encourage establishment of mentor relationships with senior researchers, and disseminate information about research and publishing opportunities.

Finally, the Research and Educational Practice unit is developing a body of research on the way information is used by educators to improve teaching, learning, administration, and other aspects of educational practice. An initial conference on equity and information use was held in February. The results are being used to plan further research on how information from research and practice can become more widely available to teachers and administrators. Working with the urban team, this group will also be testing the NIE Practice File, an exploratory program to see whether information on successful teaching practices can be stored and shared with teachers in the same way research information has been made accessible to researchers. The Practice File concept is now being tested in 12 sites, including two urban sites.

Approaches to Assessing Progress

It is the responsibility of the National Council on Educational Research to guide and review the execution of NIE's Congressional mandate. The equity objective is, as we have seen, a central element in that mandate. While assessing progress in the equity area is difficult, in part because of the constraints cited earlier in this paper, there are several approaches that, in combination, may indicate what is being accomplished. These examples are presented to stimulate discussion.

- o Conceptual orientation. One approach to assessing progress toward equity is the degree to which the Institute's activities are oriented toward achieving improvements in equity. For example, is our conceptual orientation to research problems discipline or equity based? Do our research designs show specific and direct attention to equity concerns? To what extent does the research program incorporate studies that hold promise of producing useful studies that hold promise of producing useful information for improving equity? One might ask to what degree and how equity concerns pervade all the work the Institute supports. These are the questions that need to be raised and answered in

assessing and articulating the Institute's orientation toward improving equity.

- o Evaluations of project outcomes. Another approach to assessing equity is through the evaluations of individual projects. There are many examples of projects that have successfully contributed to equity such as the Career Intern Program and the Experience Based Career Education project. Project Freestyle, the Emmy award winning television program designed to reduce sex role stereotyping, is the most recent example of an Institute planned and sponsored project that has been highly successful. Major evaluations of Institute programs will continue to be reported to the Council.
- o Programmatic development. A third approach to equity is assessing the development of research in each of the Institute's program areas. To what extent does NIE's program of research and dissemination activities show a clear progression from one problem or set of problems to later-stage problems in a logical manner? Does the course of NIE's research indicate that some problems are being overcome and attention is moving on to new issues and challenges? The Desegregation Studies program has shown this sort of progression, as attention has moved from barriers to access to problems of avoiding resegregation and other second-

generation problems. In mathematics there has been movement from a discipline oriented approach to examining the barriers to equity for women and minorities. Another way of examining the same issue is to ask whether the research builds on findings of earlier research and shows cumulative progress toward ways of increasing equity.

- o Indicators of Impact. This is perhaps the most difficult area to assess progress in, though probably the most important. It is inappropriate to tie progress toward educational equity to short-run improvements in achievement scores among minorities and the disadvantaged. Yet there may be direct or indirect indicators of improvement in the equity situation to which we can turn. These would include: (1) general indicators of equity gains on the part of those who have not been served in the past; (2) specific indicators of success of NIE-sponsored activities in improving equity on a national basis; (3) indications that NIE's research and policy studies have had an impact upon public debate, the climate of opinion, national policy or legislation in a way that will enhance equity in the long run.

While this paper emphasizes the Institute's conceptual orientation to improving equity, we have also described several examples of specific projects that clearly show the achievement of greater equity. There have also been indications of progress in programmatic development.